

## REMARKS

Applicant's attorney thanks the Examiner for the careful consideration given to this application. As explained below in detail, the claims have been amended to place them in condition for allowance.

Initially, it is noted that newly presented claim 17 is more closely conformed with US method claim style. The method of claim 17 is similar to that set forth in the prior method claims and disclosed throughout the application. Accordingly, the method includes reducing the displacement speed of the mat at the very point on its path of displacement where it is compacted in the thickness direction.

In response to the rejections set forth under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, the claims have been amended in accordance with the Examiner suggestions. For convenience, these amendments are summarized below in the same order as presented by the Examiner.

- Claim 9 has been amended to delete "intended" at each occurrence thereof.

- Claim 11 has been amended to delete "second".

- Claim 14 has been amended to amend "other movable element" to -another movable element-.

•Claim 15 has been amended to recite -means for maintaining-.

•Claim 16 has been amended to a proper method claim format.

Accordingly, the rejections under 35 USC 112 are overcome.

The amendment of claim 16 also overcomes its rejection under 35 USC 101. Amended 16 sets forth a proper method claim.

The rejections of the claims under 35 USC 102 and 35 USC 103 as set forth in paragraphs 4 through 10 of the action are overcome by the above amendments of claims 1 and 9. In paragraphs 11 and 12 of the action, the Examiner indicated the allowability of claims 8 and 15. Accordingly, the subject matter of claim 8 has been incorporated in claim 1 and a subject matter of claims 13 and 15 has been incorporated in claim 9. It is submitted that claims 1-7, 9-12, 14 and 16 are in condition for allowance.

As noted above, newly presented claim 17 includes reducing the displacement speed of the mat at the very point on its path of displacement where it is compacted in the thickness direction. To that end, claim 17 recites a mat of organic filaments or organic fibers, providing a first movable element operable at a first linear speed for

transporting the mat along a displacement path and another movable element operable at another linear speed for further transporting the mat along the displacement path. The claim further recites forming a nipping point with the another movable element being arranged above the first movable element, and reducing the displacement speed of the mat in the nipping point by operating the another movable element at a linear speed that is from about 5% to about 50% lower than that of the first movable element. Claim 17 further completes the processing by consolidating the compacted mat at a downstream consolidation station to form a consolidated mat, and wetting the mat at compacting or just downstream of compacting.

Goldman does not teach or suggest the claimed process. More particularly, Goldman teaches that a picker lap 10 is delivered as a spray of fibers 18 onto the condenser 17. The spray of fibers 18 has no disclosed speed which may be considered to be reduced. Therefore, the patent does not teach reducing the displacement speed of the mat in the nipping point by operating the another movable element at a linear speed that is from about 5% to about 50% lower than that of the first movable element as set forth in claim 17. Contrarily, Goldman teaches the formation of a new fiber

mat at 17, and not the reduction of the speed of an existing fiber mat as claimed.

Kummermehr teaches processing of mineral wool which comprise inorganic materials as opposed to the claimed organic filaments or fibers. Further, Kummermehr discloses two couples of conveyors 18, 19 and 20, 22. The conveyors in each couple operate at the same speed, and there is only a difference in speed between the speed of the couple 18, 19 and the speed of the couple 20, 22. However, there is no compaction between the couples 18, 19 and 20, 22, and the claim 17 is thereby distinguished. The claimed nipping point with upper and lower moveable elements and compaction at the nipping point are not disclosed or suggested by Kummermehr.

The Dilo teaching is similar to Kummermehr as to the use of couples of rollers. More particularly, Dilo also discloses couples of rollers, and no nipping point with upper and lower moveable elements are disclosed.

Accordingly, the cited art fails to disclose or suggest a nipping point between two superimposed moveable elements for compacting a mat in the thickness direction while reducing its speed. Claim 17 is distinguished over the art.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that claims 1-7, 9-12, 14, 16 and 17 are in condition for allowance and such action is requested.

If there are any fees required by this amendment, please charge the same to Deposit Account No. 16-0820, Order No. CAB-38031.

Respectfully submitted,

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February 25, 2008